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ABSTRACT

This summary paper, the result of an ongoing collaborative process, presents an extended policy statement for English Language Arts K-12 in Saskatchewan, Canada. The paper is in five major sections: (1) Introduction; (2) Foundations and Principles (outlining the value of language--both dynamic and rule-governed--as a foundation for the English Language Arts curriculum); (3) Curriculum Goals (including five charts of specific instructional goals and learning outcomes for specific phases); (4) Organizing for Instruction (curriculum overview, including sections on integration, personal growth, special needs students, Indian and Metis students, multicultural classrooms, designated French school students, experiential learning, and resource-based learning); and (5) Curriculum Framework. (SR)

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Policy for English Language Arts
Kindergarten to Grade Twel

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Policy for English Language Arts
Kindergarten to Grade Twelve
for Saskatchewan Schools

Summary Paper

Saskatchewan Education

June 1989

Acknowledgements

This summary paper represents the result of the ongoing collaborative process established by "Directions" in 1984. An important step in this process was the development of a foundational document by Trevor Gambell, Professor of Curriculum Studies at the University of Saskatchewan, and the conducting of a field study. The following pages reflect the insights, ideas, and recommendations of the English Language Arts K to 12 Curriculum Advisory Committee, the Saskatchewan Education Program Team, and numerous other educators who participated in the development of policy for English Language Arts.

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Introduction

The ultimate aim of the K to 12 English Language Arts program is to graduate articulate and literate citizens. Through this program, students will become confident users of language and versatile thinkers. They will develop into adults who can adapt language for learning, for expressing their ideas with fluency and clarity, and for communicating effectively with others. The fostering of students' abilities to read, write, speak, and listen will lead to this achievement and specific program objectives will detail the sequential development and extension of these abilities.

Provincially developed curriculum guides will outline teaching methodologies suited to achieve these program objectives in a wide variety of contexts.

Students' experiences and their ways of communicating thoughts and feelings provide important foundations for language development. The expansion and enrichment of these foundations depend upon language programs which recognize the full range of students' language needs. Language programs must develop the potential for learning and growth based on students' present language abilities, interests, and experiences. An important resource for language development, then, is the language which students bring to their school environment.

Literature is a strong component of the English Language Arts program. Literature celebrates the richness, complexity, and variety of human experiences across cultures and times. Literary selections also introduce students to various models of expression, kinds of sentences, and items of vocabulary. Through reading, reflecting upon, and responding to a wide array of genres and selections, students extend their language repertories and increase their understanding of themselves and others.

The English Language Arts program emphasizes continuous K to 12 involvement with exemplary models of language and literature. From Kindergarten to Grade Twelve, this program will enable students to use language processes for learning and communication. It will reflect the growing understanding of how students learn language developmentally. Understanding the patterns, structures, and conventions of standard English enhances students' abilities to speak and write meaningfully, and to read

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and listen actively. The focus of language study will be to develop this understanding.

In 1986, Saskatchewan's Core Curriculum Advisory Committee identified Language Arts as one of the seven Required Areas of Study for all K to 12 students. This recognition of the importance of language was echoed in the Committee's proposal that Communication across the curriculum K to 12 be part of the Common Essential Learnings - those skills, processes, values and abilities considered relevant to all curriculum areas of study and to students' lives outside of the K to 12 school context. This emphasis on language arts instruction has also been prompted by the need for improved literacy and communication abilities as expressed by governments, post-secondary educators, employers, and the general Canadian populace.

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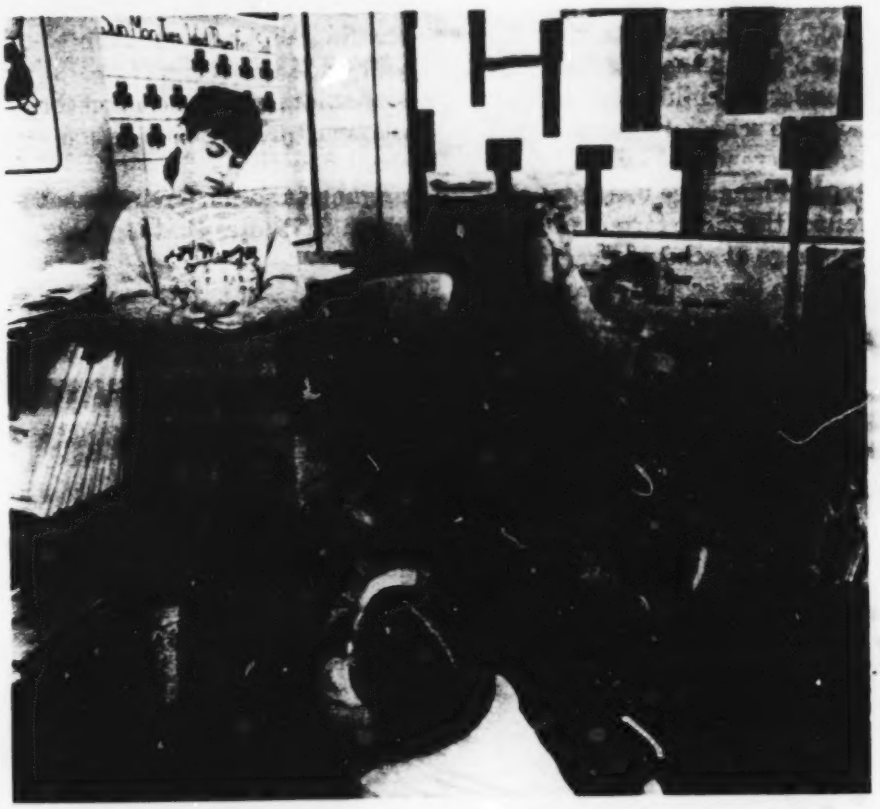
Foundations and Principles

The following discussion outlines the value of language as a foundation for the English Language Arts curriculum. It is based upon the principle that language curricula and language instruction should reflect the nature of language as a human phenomenon - both dynamic and rule-governed.

All languages are permeated by rules and conventions. These conventions provide a particular range of the options available at any given moment in order for effective communication to proceed. Formal written English is especially affected by convention: here, precise usage in meaning, grammatical function, spelling, and punctuation is essential. As students progress, their instruction should increasingly enable them to acquire as many language conventions as possible. This acquisition cannot be left to time and chance.

Language is a highly complex system with several crucially interrelated subsystems: we form words out of sounds or written symbols; we build phrases or sentences capable of communicating subtleties of meaning; we take account of who the audience is; and we are influenced by our own motives for communicating and by the larger social and cultural contexts within which we are to communicate. While particular parts of the language system will form legitimate subjects of instruction, they should do so in ways that help students to see the relation of these parts to language as a whole. What is ultimately important is the students' use of language to attain and convey meaning.



Because the language which students use represents who they are, as well as their cultural background and personal and social worlds, that language must be responded to with sensitivity and respect. Instruction in English Language Arts will provide students with a bridge between their own language usage and competent usage of standard English. Gaining proficiency with standard English usage will, after all, expand educational, recreational, and vocational opportunities for students.

Students learn language in context. For this reason it is the task of the schools to provide students with a rich and varied language environment through which students will grow in fluency and clarity in their use of language and acquisition of standard English. One of the strongest guidelines for fostering this achievement is

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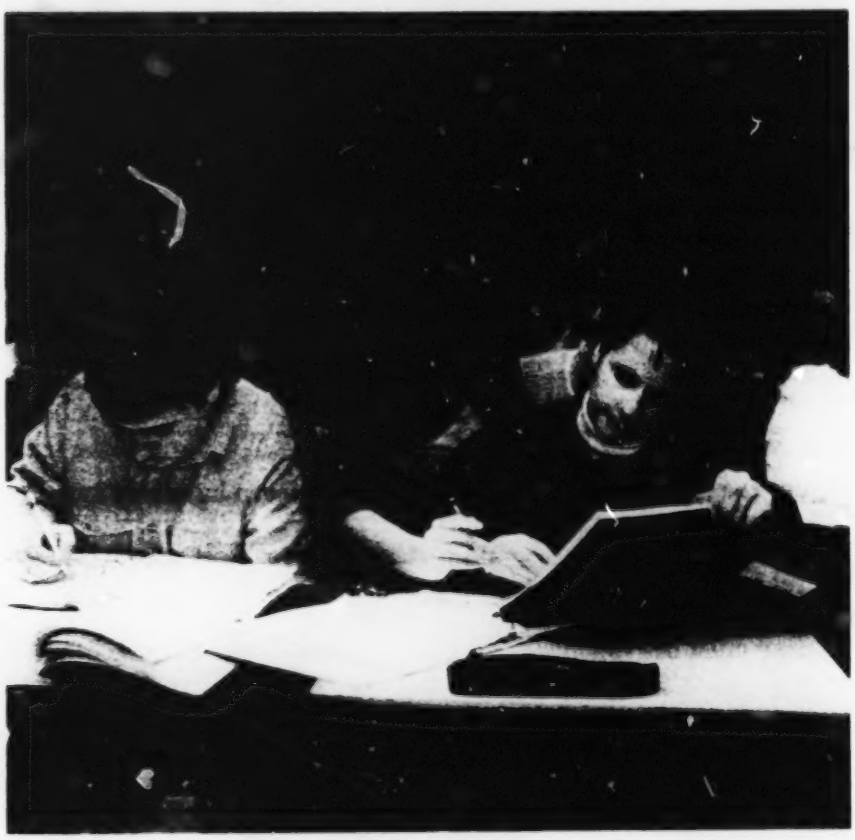
ensuring that the teaching of language conventions be done in the context of students' oral and written communications and through their continuous involvement with literature and language models.

The process by which children learn language provides a framework for curriculum development. Initially, they learn by acquiring ways of understanding and talking which match those of family and friends. As children move from home to school, however, they learn to read and write and expand language usage to reflect the more formal usage of language at school. Progressing through the school years and beyond, students learn to use language in increasingly specialized ways. With its dynamic and generative qualities, language offers them tremendous potential to communicate, describe, question, and transform. At school students will develop the specialized abilities to read, write, speak, and listen which will enable them to succeed in the larger world.

The English Language Arts policy and the K to 12 curriculum are based upon the following principles or beliefs about how students learn language and the environment which facilitates that learning.

Effective language models are essential.



When students are surrounded by exemplary models of language and when they are encouraged to use such language for various purposes in a positive and supportive context, they grow in their capacity to express themselves in speaking and writing. Such models of language include the oral and written language of teachers, the language of literature and media, as well as other resources used across the curriculum. In this language environment, students establish, develop, and extend their proficiency with conventions of standard English.

Most students arrive in school with considerable oral language competence and some knowledge about written language.

Children rapidly acquire the sounds and syntax of the language spoken in the home. By school age, their speech approximates that of the adults in their world. Many early elementary students recognize letters and symbols on signs, buildings, and foods. They often show keen interest in trying to print and read "messages." These students know that print and talk (or reading) go together.

Children bring with them a great resource and a sincere interest in language. Upon this foundation, teachers can build effective instructional programs which will gradually increase

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students' competence as language users and expand and refine their knowledge about the English language.

In other words, it is the responsibility of the school to accept and cherish the language children bring from their homes; at the same time the school must extend students' awareness of and ability in language to meet the demands of the wider society.

Students initially learn language in purposeful, meaningful units.

Language develops as students strive to make sense and order of what they see, hear, and feel. They attempt to communicate messages that convey meaning or feeling to others by speaking, drawing or writing, long before they understand and appreciate the many subskills involved in such transactions and before they identify reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing as disparate language processes. In their efforts to comprehend what others print, say, or read to them, and in their attempts to express meaningful messages back to others, students focus on the overall or "whole" meaning of the communication.

It is in the context of the focus on meaning that students best learn the skills of language. Instruction in specific strategies is necessary in a language arts program. Through exploring meaning in context, teachers instruct students in strategies such as phonics, sentence and paragraph structure, standard usage, and spelling. In an instructional environment that has students apply the elements of language in meaningful situations, students become successful readers, writers, speakers, and listeners.

Students must have the opportunity to apply language abilities across the curriculum. At school, the resources and examples of language should be rooted in the students' own environment and in their interests and prior knowledge. Such instruction typifies a meaningful and integrated English Language Arts curriculum.

Language develops in social, cultural, and functional contexts.

Children acquire and extend their language abilities by communicating with others. This social interaction begins in the intimate setting of the home, where attitudes, language, and thinking abilities develop in the first language or dialect. Early language use is very closely related to children's cultural identity and to their budding self-image and feelings of personal worth.

K to 12 classroom language experiences should be functional. Language use and study should fulfill purposes that are meaningful and obvious to students. They need an

environment rich in opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge of language to: communicate with various audiences; express their own ideas, opinions, and feelings through speech and writing; and, think and learn in all subject areas.

Given the interrelationships among the language arts, there is a need for a fully integrated curriculum characterized by coherence and continuity.

Because the aspects and skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing are complementary, instruction in the English Language Arts program will systematically integrate these aspects and skills, making students' learning more effective. Such an approach has proven to be superior to one that artificially fragments these areas. To achieve integrated instruction, teachers take into account such factors as: the objectives outlined in the English Language Arts curriculum, students' interests and abilities, their strengths and weaknesses, and the topics and language skills needed in other subject areas.

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Curriculum Goals

This section provides a statement of the fundamental goals of the K to 12 English Language Arts curriculum.

To encourage enjoyment of, and develop proficiency in, reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Through listening and reading for enjoyment, students become aware of the ways others use language. By this means, they develop an "ear" for language patterns which they put to use in their own speech and writing.

Students develop proficiency in the language arts as they come to understand the why and how of competent language use. Students learn that speakers' decisions about the choice of topic, the words they use, or how they organize their messages are made in accordance with the purposes for communicating and with an awareness of who their audience will be. Similarly, readers decide whether to skim or read slowly, omit parts of a text or take detailed notes according to their purposes for reading.

To develop appreciation of, and responses to, literature.

Literature provides a unique means of exploring the spectrum of human concerns and behaviour. By experiencing regional, national, and world literature, past and present, students acquire insights into the human community -- its cultures, societies, and languages.

Canadian literature embraces the writings, both traditional and modern, of all the peoples of Canada. Students will explore the range of this literature and of the many Canadian writers who continue to produce literature of international repute. Familiarity with Canadian literature increases understanding of the Canadian ambiance and identity.

Discussions about literature offer students the opportunity to reflect on literary form and on use of language. Students thus learn that an author's topic, aims, and audience determine form and language.

To develop students' language abilities as a function of their thinking abilities.

Language is fundamental for thinking and learning. It is the system which enables humans to symbolize information and ideas. Once thoughts, feelings, and opinions are spoken or written, they can be shared, reflected upon, shaped, expanded, defended or disregarded.

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Language and thought develop together and are interdependent. As language develops so does thought. As students develop more complex thinking strategies, they seek out new or more appropriate ways of clarifying and expressing those thoughts. Expressing thoughts and knowledge also aids memory. Classroom instruction must include opportunities for students to use written and oral language to describe, hypothesize, analyze, classify, synthesize, and evaluate information and experiences.

To promote personal growth and social development through developing students' knowledge and use of language and their understanding of the human condition.

Language is a system of symbols that allows students to explore and learn about their world. Growth in the understanding of language and the increased use of that system as a vehicle for thought, expression, communication, and enjoyment assists learning in all subject areas and promotes self-esteem. It also enlarges students' worlds and their ability to adapt to and understand various social situations.

Social growth occurs when students feel they are worthy and capable members of society and when they deepen their self-understanding and knowledge of others. Confident language users, equipped with literacy and communication skills, will have greater ability and increased courage to function in the modern world.

Repeated interaction with literature also increases students' sensitivity to social and cultural dynamics and to the emotional needs of others.

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Specific Instructional Goals and Learning Outcomes

The curriculum is structured in terms of a K to 12 program scope and sequence of learning outcomes. The scope of the curriculum covers literacy and oracy and includes the strategies and content from the supporting domains to assist the development of the processes of literacy and oracy. (See Curriculum Framework section of this paper.)

- provides the K to 12 curriculum framework;
- is based on principles of growth in language ability;
- gives direction to curriculum writers and will give direction to teachers.

The learning outcomes comprise knowledge, skills, processes, values, and attitudes. These are sequenced to correspond to students' language development as they progress from one phase of the English Language Arts curriculum to the next. It is difficult at times to separate knowledge and skills, processes and skills, or values and attitudes. However, content and strategies which take account of student development in all of these areas will be included.

The charts on the following pages provide an example of some of the program goals and student objectives from the four phases. Detailed and complete scope and sequence charts will be included in each curriculum guide. These charts are intended to model how the detailed scope and sequence:

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Emerging Phase K - 1

Domain	Sample Instructional Goals and Methods	Summary Expectations for Students	Sample Learning Outcomes
Literacy: Reading	• model predictable English language patterns and structures • kindle students' interest in the reading process	• demonstrate understanding that print conveys meaning • develop awareness that we read for information and enjoyment	• recognize own name in print • predict or recite recurring words, phrases or story parts • understand directionality of print
Literature and Response	• introduce a variety of literature selections and genres including predictable books, nursery rhymes, finger games, poems, animal stories . . .	• demonstrate desire and ability to follow and interpret a variety of literature selections	• participate in reading and reciting activities such as choral speaking • demonstrate ability to recognize and enjoy literary elements such as series of events, story characters, and humourous incidents
Writing	• model and display manuscript letter formation • expose students to a variety of environmental print and literature examples	• discover that everyone's ideas can be expressed in print	• dictate ideas and accounts of personal experience for others to record • engage in attempts to write and explore letter and word formations
Language Study	• provide frequent opportunities for students to explore language patterns and rhymes • introduce school specific terminology	• understand that there is an English word or label for every person, thing, place, idea, and feeling	• demonstrate an increase in English vocabulary • understand school specific language terms such as letter, word, alphabet, question, poem, number, sentence
Oracy: Speaking	• provide opportunities for students to make their meaning known by speaking comfortably in classroom contexts	• use oral language to explore and clarify thoughts and feelings	• attempt to adapt volume, projection, and emphasis to the speaking occasion • attempt to express thoughts and feelings in phrases and sentences
Listening	• vary classroom listening opportunities to include listening for enjoyment and listening for specific information	• use listening as a means of understanding the meaning and intent of others	• sense the moods and emotions conveyed by a speaker or story character

Developing Phase Year 1

Domain	Sample Instructional Goals and Methods	Summary Expectations for Students	Sample Learning Outcomes
Literacy: Reading	• instruct students in the semantic, syntactic, and phonic cueing systems	• demonstrate interest in reading for pleasure and information	• attempt to read a variety of books and selections • browse through books and other printed materials during spare time • understand letter-sound relationships in frequently used words
Literature and Response	• encourage and support students' reactions to the ideas and feelings expressed in literature	• relate what is read to personal experience and previous literature selections	• predict story events, outcomes or conclusions • create mental images while reading or listening
Writing	• provide daily writing opportunities for students	• write thoughts and feelings	• take risks with letter formation and invented spellings • write related series of sentences, dealing with one topic or idea • create stories and poems independently and following frames and patterns
Language Study	• model the use of punctuation and capitalization to clarify written communication	• appreciate the need for language conventions for readers	• capitalize beginnings in writings • punctuate endings when writing • extend sentences by adding descriptive words, phrases
Oracy: Speaking	• provide planned opportunities for students to speak with peers and adults in classroom situations	• increase competence and confidence in speaking to peers and adults	• participate in informal classroom conversations, discussions, and reports • express thoughts and feelings with increasing fluency
Listening	• develop students' critical and appreciative listening skills	• listen and think critically when the context is concrete and relevant to personal experiences and knowledge	• begin to determine a speaker's purpose • begin to distinguish between fact and fantasy • begin to recognize methods used by speakers and readers to emphasize meaning

Developing Phase Year 5

Domain	Sample Instructional Goals and Methods	Summary Expectations for Students	Sample Learning Outcomes
Literacy: Reading	• develop students' analytic and evaluative reading and thinking abilities	• interpret and judge the ideas and events in literature, and the actions and motives of characters	• summarize authors' main ideas and give opinions about authors' treatment of topics • apply various cueing systems to determine unfamiliar words in context
Literature and Response	• introduce students to the literature from various ethnic and cultural groups	• recognize and appreciate the similarities and differences among peoples portrayed in literature	• understand that legends frequently express the social mores of a particular culture • recognize the features that comprise a tall tale • explain preferences for various types of literature or specific authors
Writing	• provide opportunities for students to clarify and organize ideas for themselves through writing	• use writing to explore own ideas and feelings • employ the writing process	• write a titled paragraph which states the topic, develops that topic, and summarizes the expressed ideas • write legibly • share writing with others • peer-edit writing
Language Study	• teach students about grammatical structure and the conventions of written language in the context of students' writing	• demonstrate proofreading to edit and correct own and others' writing	• write increasingly complex sentences using connectives such as after, although, whenever, before • proofread written works for spelling, accepted usage of pronouns, subject-verb agreement, grammatical word order
Oracy: Speaking	• provide planned opportunities for students to speak informally and formally for various purposes and audiences • model standard English for students	• develop competence and fluency in oral communication	• participate confidently and fluently in formal classroom situations such as discussions, oral reading, interviewing, and oral reporting in all subject areas • express and support personal opinions
Listening	• enable students to control personal listening in varying contexts and conditions	• adapt listening to the communication context and purpose for listening	• concentrate on a conversation or small group discussion amid classroom distractions • listen to the ideas and opinions of others in conversations, discussions, and presentations • determine inferences and implied meanings

Extending Phase Year 9

Domain	Sample Instructional Goals and Methods	Summary Expectations for Students	Sample Learning Outcomes
Literacy: Reading	• extend students' efficiency and control of reading strategies	• adjust reading rate according to purpose, familiarity with content, and difficulty of material	• use skimming when searching for specific details or information • synthesize material from multiple passages or paragraphs • comprehend literally and inferentially
Literature and Response	• develop students' understanding and appreciation of literature as an art	• recognize that the backgrounds and purposes of writers affect what and how they write	• discern authors' purposes (to entertain, to explain, to persuade, to defend, to expose) • recognize folklore as oral transmission of art forms • recognize imagery, including words, phrases, and sentences which express sensory impressions, feelings, and emotions
Writing	• emphasize the writing process approach • enable students to produce accurate, effective, and correct drafts of writing which will be read by others -- public writing	• be able to evaluate, revise, and edit to improve own and others' writing	• reorder written material to catch a reader's interest • proofread for accurate use of language and accuracy of meaning conveyed
Language Study	• increase students' understanding that language usage and language structures are determined by purpose, audience, and situation	• distinguish between formal and informal language • understand that propaganda and doublespeak represent deliberate attempts to misuse language and distort logic	• recognize colloquialism, slang, and nonstandard English • know differences between correct, complete sentences and sentence fragments and run-on sentences, in speech and in writing
Oracy: Speaking	• structure collaborative learning situations	• contribute constructively to small group discussions	• use speech effectively for exploring possibilities or solutions to a problem • respond constructively to the views of others
Listening	• enable students to use verbal and nonverbal cues in the interpretation of oral communication	• evaluate ideas presented in interviews, speeches, and discussions	• evaluate ideas presented in interviews, speeches, and discussions • differentiate between fact and opinion, emotional and rational language

Specialized Phase Year 12

Domain	Sample Instructional Goals and Methods	Summary Expectations for Students	Sample Learning Outcomes
Literacy: Reading	• structure reading experiences and activities that will encourage students to clarify and extend their thinking	• challenge intellectual capacities and gain insights into personal and social problems through reading	• discern social comments often made in written works • relate specific issues in literature to personal experiences • draw conclusions and make generalizations from printed materials
Literature and Response	• promote students' interactions with literature so that they will be able to personally interpret and evaluate complete works and defend their own responses	• analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of literary works on the basis of a variety of literary criteria	• understand social and historical contexts for authors and their works • form and defend personal judgments about a passage or text
Writing	• assist students to use the written conventions of standard English for a variety of purposes and types of writing	• organize information and personal thoughts in a variety of forms of written expression	• compose essays, letters, poems, prose solutions, diaries, and journals which record and communicate personal ideas • write research papers and papers evaluating literary works
Language Study	• refine students' abilities to generate sentences, and structures within sentences • refine students' knowledge of grammatical structures and terminology to facilitate use and discussion of language elements	• understand and use different logical and structural patterns of language	• use subordinate, parallel, and balanced grammatical structures in sentences for various effects and purposes
Oracy: Speaking	• enable students to become proficient and effective speakers in formal and informal talk	• use speech which reflects a sense of personal and social responsibility	• be willing to accept and encourage the contributions of others • show ability to lead group discussions • demonstrate tact in resolving disagreements • argue a point of view by means of definitions and analysis
Listening	• assist students to use listening as an active process of aural perception	• be able to listen critically and selectively to gain information and analyze that information for reliability	• listen analytically to evaluate: - techniques such as emotional appeal; - appeal to community-held values to influence audiences

Organizing for Instruction

Curriculum Overview

A curriculum is a framework for the achievement of educational goals through classroom instruction. At the same time, it is a document that presents the objectives and broad content for a subject area. The English Language Arts curriculum provides the structure within which teachers make decisions about specific content, instruction, and evaluation. This curriculum gives the teacher sufficient discretion to meet the needs of individual students in various settings, while making clear the expectations for student development at each grade level. While model units will be provided, teachers are encouraged to develop their ideas within the framework and grade level expectations for student development outlined in the curriculum.

This curriculum incorporates a wide range of literature for K to 12 students. For each grade the curriculum provides a list of titles representing regional, national and international literature appropriate for students in that grade. The list consists of two parts: selections that are central for the program in that grade but which by themselves are insufficient in number to support a year's work; and, selections from which teachers can choose to complete the range of literature that students will interact with during that year. The program does not place any limits on the range or amount of individual student reading in addition to those selections studied in the English Language Arts program. Rather, the curriculum encourages continuous availability of student choice from a wide range of quality fiction and nonfiction materials.

Many teachers will recognize that the curriculum supports their current classroom practices. However, a focus on current language research and specific provincial concerns may necessitate gradual change. Changes in practice may influence resources and methods of instruction, and may increase the emphasis on the importance of language in learning and thinking.

Flexibility will be built into the English Language Arts K to 12 curriculum through the **Adaptive Dimension** - the suggested activities and program options which teachers

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can use for English language arts reinforcement, enrichment, practical application or the mastering of specific skills or processes. As well, specific strategies for adapting the curriculum to multigrade classrooms will be addressed during the piloting and implementation stages.

Integration

Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are closely related processes, each being a facet of language ability. Growth in one area usually facilitates growth in the others. The K to 12 English Language Arts curriculum emphasizes the relationships between reading and writing and between speaking and listening. As students engage in complex language and thinking activities, they come to rely on previous language learnings and established language abilities. Clear and fluent oral expression of ideas leads to clear expression of ideas in writing. Listening attentively to the ideas of others facilitates further generation of ideas. Integrated instruction in reading and writing helps students to understand that the goal of reading is to develop meaning and not merely to decode words into sounds. Students learn that skillful, appropriate use of punctuation, capitalization, and sentence structure aids the reader in comprehending the writer's message and aids the writer in communicating effectively.

It may still be necessary to develop language skills according to the needs of an entire class or individual students. At times, skill instruction and practice may involve all students; at other times, instruction may be for individuals if specific needs and weaknesses are diagnosed. The curriculum encourages a balance whereby students acquire literacy and oracy skills through specific instruction and self-application in meaningful contexts.

The focus on integration extends to the recognition that language is more than a subject - it is the centrepiece of learning in all subjects. A student who is fluent in spoken and written language has an indispensable tool for learning in all subjects. Therefore, strategies designed to reinforce and expand teachers' efforts to develop language abilities across the curriculum will be included.

Personal Growth

An effective language arts program should accommodate the range of student needs, abilities, and experiences typically found in any one classroom. Language is a process intimately linked with personal growth and the human need for articulation, communication, and acceptance.

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The development of self-esteem and social as well as academic confidence are closely tied to the development of linguistic fluency and control.

The English Language Arts curriculum assists teachers in their continuing efforts to adapt the content and learning experiences to match students' needs and extend their abilities.

The curriculum promotes personal growth by assisting the continuous development and extension of students' language and thinking processes, and increasing students' sensitivity to social and cultural dynamics and the emotional needs of others.

Special Needs Students

The basic philosophy and emphases of the K to 12 curriculum outline a program designed to promote language growth and the acquisition of communication abilities. However, the curriculum may have to be modified for some students. These modifications and adaptations may necessitate changes in program objectives, instructional materials, teaching strategies, or evaluation while leading towards the same general goals.

Indian and Métis Students

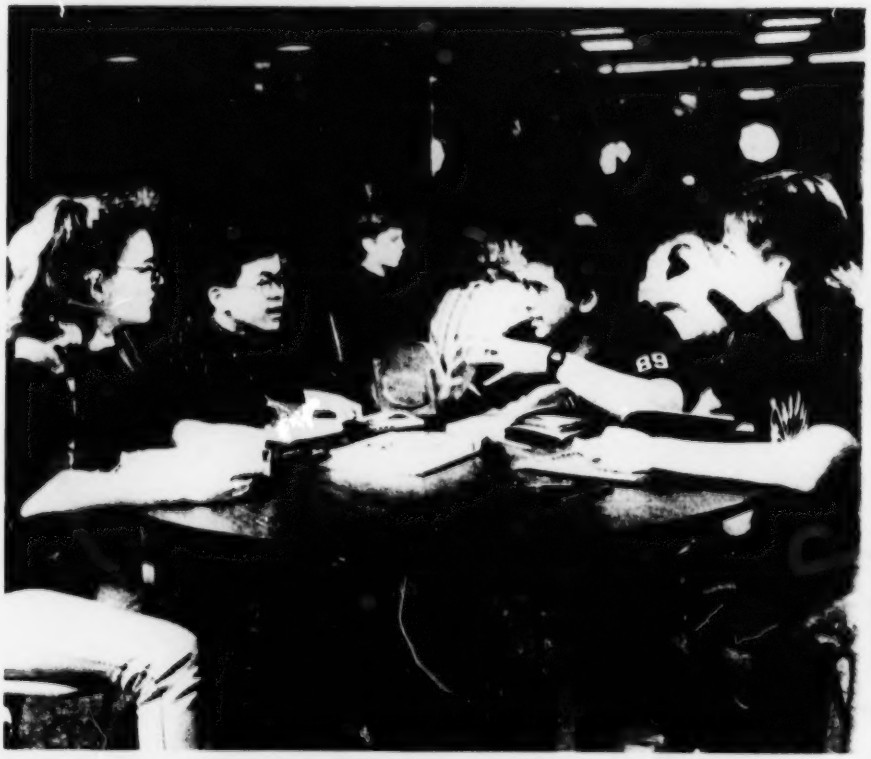
The English Language Arts curriculum incorporates at each grade level literature that portrays aboriginal peoples positively and accurately in historical and contemporary settings. In addition, the curriculum provides instructional approaches and strategies that accommodate a variety of learning styles, a range of language characteristics, and promote respect for Indian and Métis cultural values.

Multicultural Classrooms

Incorporated in the curriculum are instructional guidelines and suggested strategies to assist teachers in multicultural classroom situations. Lists of resources and literature that reflect positively and accurately the diverse cultural reality of our world will be supplied. Model units and planning guidelines will provide suggestions for teachers that will enable them to accommodate E.S.L. (English as a Second Language) students.

Designated French School Students

The English Language Arts curriculum also provides suggestions for teachers in designated French schools to help them adapt the program to meet the particular needs of students who begin formal study of English in Grade 2 or 3, and who may spend less time on English Language Arts during part of their schooling. Teaching strategies designed to foster the transfer of knowledge, attitudes, and skills from French Language Arts are included in the curriculum.



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Experiential Learning

The experiential approach to literacy development recognizes that school activities and lesson content must have personal and cultural relevance to the learner. Schools must relate language and literacy development to the media-saturated environment in which most Saskatchewan students participate daily.

Although some commercial language arts programs provide an integrated structure for teachers, our curriculum emphasizes the adaptation of such materials, and suggests other resources and activities to incorporate students' backgrounds and experiences into daily instruction. These adaptations must be made at the classroom level by teachers who know their students well. Detailed scope and sequence charts which outline expected learning outcomes and developmental progress will assist teachers in their planning and program modifications. All materials and practices adopted by teachers should be extended to include experiential learning strategies.

An experiential approach is based on the following premises:

- that language learning is developmental and continuous; it begins at birth and extends beyond formal schooling;

- that meaning is the core of language experiences; literacy and oracy must begin with real, natural, and relevant written and oral language;

- that the interrelationships among the language arts be emphasized through integrated instruction; this approach advocates the frequent use of students' oral language and experiences for the creation of classroom reading materials. This integrates the teaching of reading with the other language arts as children listen, speak, write (or dictate), and read about their experiences and see their ideas in print. Reading has most meaning to students when the materials being read are expressed in their language and are rooted in their experiences. This is appropriate at the grade 1 and 2 levels, and with students whose first language or dialect is not standard English;

- that students must be immersed in a classroom environment rich in literature and print. When teachers label classroom objects and when they display samples of environmental print, young students experience the language arts in purposeful and meaningful ways. Classrooms should contain books in various literary genres, student- and teacher-written messages, travel books, pamphlets, maps, catalogues, texts and reference books, charts, newspapers and magazines, for students to examine at their leisure and for specific assignments.

Resource-Based Learning

Saskatchewan Education is committed to resource-based learning in Saskatchewan schools. This commitment requires greater divisional and local control in material selection to accommodate the diversity of needs, interests, and talents of Saskatchewan students and teachers. References in the K to 12 curriculum to specific literary selections and resources are to serve as examples for teachers. Such references will be supplemented by lists of optional topics and alternate titles.

The curriculum describes an integrated approach to language and literacy development at all levels - an approach that utilizes a variety of resources for instruction and reduces teachers' dependence on one text or program. Resources include:

- samples of written language from students' environment;

- predictable materials such as rhymes, songs, poems, in addition to classic and contemporary literature;

- locally written and/or produced materials such as stories, photographs, slides, video tapes, and audio tapes;

- taped television and radio speeches, debates, newscasts, documentary films, and commercials;
- books, pamphlets, and other media from school resource centres and community libraries;
- materials students might bring from home for specific topics;
- materials used in content areas across the curriculum;
- student productions and compositions;
- teacher-made materials.

Evaluation

Evaluation is a complex process at all grade levels. In English language arts, the process involves:

Assessment - a series of activities or techniques used to gather information about students' language development and competence, their growth in language use and in their abilities in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Strengths and weaknesses should be assessed.

Evaluation - the decision-making which follows assessment. Decisions must be made about the most beneficial teaching strategies for a student or a group of students. The gathered information assists teachers and students in improving the learning situation.

This curriculum emphasizes evaluation as a continuous classroom process. Such ongoing or formative evaluation keeps students and parents informed of student progress, kinds of accomplishments, present difficulties, and need for program modification. The curriculum will also show an increased emphasis on the student's role in formative evaluation. As students mature, they share the responsibility of evaluation through self assessment and peer evaluation.

The curriculum provides a variety of monitoring techniques: checklists and inventories, observation guides, cloze tests, and student writing samples. Teachers are encouraged to use student-teacher interviews, term papers, video and audio tapes, individual and group reports, oral exams, open-book tests, and parent-teacher conferences as assessment strategies.

Summative evaluation occurs at strategic times such as the end of a unit, a theme, a chapter of study or a term. The purpose of summative evaluation is to examine what has been learned over a period of time and then to inform the students, the teachers, and the parents of progress relative to curriculum objectives.

Assessment strategies for summative evaluation include teachers' anecdotal notes about student behaviour, language samples, student in-class responses, and notes made on student-teacher conferences.

Assessment and evaluation are used for planning an instructional program and reporting student progress either informally or formally. This process must take into account personal and cultural differences among students.

Curriculum Framework

Domains and Phases

The basic structure of the English Language Arts K to 12 curriculum is outlined in the following diagram:

Domains	Levels and Phases			
	Emerging Phase →	Developing Phase →	Extending Phase →	Specialized Phase
Literacy:		Elementary	Middle	Secondary
Reading Literature and Response Writing Language Study	K to 1	1 to 5	6 to 9	10 to 12
Oracy: Speaking Listening				

This curriculum emphasizes ongoing development of the two major, interrelated language domains, literacy and oracy.

The actual curriculum is divided into four phases which approximate the sequential phases of students' linguistic and cognitive development:

- The Emerging Phase, the K to 1 level, relates to and builds upon children's emerging interests and abilities in oracy and literacy.
- The Developing Phase, years 1 to 5, focuses on expanding students' language, increasing their fluency and confidence in language use, and providing varied purposes for using language in the learning contexts of the classroom.

- The Extending Phase, years 6 to 9, includes the reinforcement and refinement of language processes for learning and for public use, as well as increased language study.

- The Specialized Phase, years 10 to 12, focuses on: analysis and evaluation of literature and of language structures; and, use and application of specific language and structures for particular audiences and purposes.

The curriculum also refers to strategies and activities that develop students' abilities through the supporting domains. These supplement the extension and development of literacy and oracy.

Included in the supporting domains are the following:

- Educational Drama

- Media (includes the ability to understand and to use effectively film, audio recordings, photographs, music, newspaper, journals, displays, exhibitions, models, videos)

- Communication and Study Skills (communication includes presentation skills; study skills include reviewing, note-making, and outlining)

- Resource Centre Abilities (information gathering, data searching, use of reference materials)

- Computer Applications (word processing)

These are not considered to be separate subjects or isolated areas of instruction in this curriculum. Class time devoted to these domains is in relation to the further development of literacy and oracy. Equal emphasis need not be given to each of the supporting domains. These supporting activities and concepts can strengthen and enrich the language and literature base of the English Language Arts curriculum.

Literacy and Oracy

Literacy

In this policy statement the term literacy refers to students' abilities to read, write, respond to literature, and study language as it is used in a variety of situations. Literacy enables students to enjoy and respond to printed language.

The scope of literacy in the curriculum covers:

- reading;

- literature and response;

- writing;

- language study.

Instructional emphases will change as students progress from one phase of the curriculum to another.

For example, reading instruction during the elementary (developing) phase includes instruction on cueing systems which enable students to increase their ability to read for meaning. Students at the secondary (specialized) level will continue to apply their knowledge of cueing systems to reading such diverse materials as poetry, editorials, research reports, essays, novels, informational texts, and reference materials. Upon graduating, students should be independent and critical readers able to meet the variety of reading challenges they will encounter in adult life.

This curriculum has an extensive literature base. The aim is to have students experience a wide range of literary selections and to develop a heightened awareness of and response to these selections.

The response-centred approach to literature acknowledges that students' personal responses to literature are necessary beginnings in developing the more critical responses that lead to an appreciation and understanding of the beauty and power of the written word.

A teacher's first responsibility is to select, and to help students eventually select for themselves, literature which is meaningful - selections which evoke a response in listeners or readers. For very young students, a complete response is absorption in a selection as they listen

intently, their thought and imaginations focused upon the unfolding events. Students' understanding of literature and the depth of their responses are intensified when they are encouraged to explore their ideas and feelings about a story's characters, settings, the illustrations, the author's words or expressions, and the events.

The most sophisticated form of response is criticism, developed as students mature in their ability to think analytically and more abstractly about the literature they experience in school. While some selections at all levels are most appropriate for private or internal response, there will be many selections which invite students' attention to such considerations as literary conventions and structures, comparisons of characters and events, elements of humour, suspense, and tragedy, genre characteristics - knowledge which develops students' literary awareness.

In summary, a response-centred approach incorporates these objectives:

- Students will feel confident and knowledgeable about their responses to a literary selection and will not depend on the responses of others.
- Students will understand their responses to selections and recognize what in the selection causes those responses.
- Students will engage in self-exploration.
- Students will respect the responses and the literary preferences of others as being valid for them.
- Students will recognize that authors and readers bring intention and purpose to their writing and reading.
- Students will be able to analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of a piece of literature on the basis of a variety of criteria.

The curriculum recognizes that learning to write is a developmental process. Writing skills are continually strengthened, refined, and extended through use and application. During the years of schooling, students continually return to the same forms of writing - reports, essays, poems, stories - but they handle them with increasingly complex levels of thought and imagination, as well as with increased knowledge, precision, and versatility.

This curriculum attends to writing at all levels. Early elementary students are eager and able to express themselves using print, if they are given the freedom and support to explore writing and attempt spellings of the words they want to use. Current studies in language development show that reading and writing develop together; teachers are not justified in delaying writing instruction and writing opportunities until students are able to spell accurately, read fluently, and print precisely.

The emphasis and place of skill instruction in the K to 12 English Language Arts curriculum is always with students' actual writing. With beginning writers, the creation and communication of ideas plus the comprehension of meaning is emphasized above the mechanics and precise structures of writing. The ultimate aim of K to 12 writing experiences and instruction is to graduate capable and confident writers - those who recognize the need for legibility, precision, and clarity of expression, and who can manipulate the language, forms, structures, and conventions of writing to suit various writing tasks.

The process approach to writing focuses upon the exploration and awareness of what writers actually do and what choices they make when they write. The teacher's role is to provide frequent, interesting, and meaningful writing opportunities for students during which they can explore and apply the various skills and conventions, including punctuation use, letter formation, syntactic variation, spelling, and standard usage. During writing activities, writers should experience prewriting and planning activities, drafting (or writing) opportunities, revising strategies, and editing or polishing activities. The amount of time spent on each

stage of the process is determined by the kind and purpose of the writing task as well as by the writers' maturity and experience.

The K to 12 curriculum promotes classroom writing experiences in which students:

- use language to create, discover, and shape experience. When students explore personal experiences or their knowledge on a topic in writing, their thoughts and ideas are often clarified and organized. Writing is also a cognitive process. In the act of writing, students often discover what they have to say - they discover what they do know - and they come to a new understanding of themselves and of the world;

- experience self-expression. Through writing daily, students can experience the power and satisfaction derived from creating meaning. Opportunities for personal writing and the exploration of personal thoughts and events are important at all levels. Classroom activities include journal writing or sustained silent writing;

- learn content in other curriculum areas. When students interpret someone else's experiences or knowledge in their own language, as they do in note-making or report writing, their understanding and retention of the information is increased. Learning is assisted whenever students write to record, review, recall, explore, inform, or persuade others;

- acquire the writing competence necessary to meet the challenges of academic and vocational pursuits, and establish writing as a lifelong skill.

Language study is an important part of literacy and oracy. At the elementary level, students study the conventions of English spelling, word order, and punctuation. They also experiment with language structures in the course of the writing process. Sentence expansion and elaboration of details can be practised orally. Teachers help students develop an ear for **what sounds right** and extend that awareness to writing **what reads well** on paper.

Language study during the middle years gives attention to more complex syntax and language. Students develop awareness of standard usage through discussions of writing, their own and others'.

At the secondary level, language is studied in terms of its effectiveness. Language study helps students become aware of

the ways in which purpose and audience dictate choices. Particular elements of style can be modified to meet the demands of the situation.

Another aspect of language study involves students' growing awareness and use of language in social contexts. Different social situations require different social skills and different language usage.

Language also evolves as new words or phrases are coined and new meanings are attached to commonplace words. The study of grammar and English usage will be included, particularly at the secondary or specialized literacy level.

Oracy

The term oracy includes both listening and speaking. The K to 12 curriculum integrates the two processes; neither one is likely to take place without the other. Using this curriculum, teachers can develop and refine students' oral language abilities at all levels.

Students need to become fluent in a variety of oral language situations from the intimate context of the home, to the casual context of friends and relatives, to the educational context of the classroom, and finally to a formal public context. Children who are beginning school are generally fluent and comfortable language users in the intimate and casual contexts. The school develops students' abilities to use standard English competently and confidently in oral expression and communication.

Talk serves students as an indispensable tool for learning. Explanations provided by others enable students to organize and attach meaning to daily observations and experiences. Through the process of communicating with others, students assimilate new ideas. Opportunities to talk about what they see, read, and hear often help students to extract meanings and messages from these experiences. By discussing a topic or experience with fellow students and a linguistically mature teacher, students may adjust previous knowledge and thus accommodate new information and an increased level of awareness. Talk shapes thought and it is often through oral expression that students arrive at understanding.

Classroom situations which invite students to use their own words to wonder or to explore, nurture a curiosity about the surrounding world. Such situations encourage the continued use of language for the purpose of inquiry. When teachers organize activities in which students can comfortably share their feelings, opinions, and existing knowledge, they develop students' use of talk as a method of organizing and expressing thought. Literature, educational drama, and media can provide additional

experiences from which oral expression and listening emerge. Open-ended questions encourage students to pursue and extend their own responses and those of others. The curriculum provides opportunities for genuine conversation, presentations, dialogue, small and large group exchanges, and private thought.

During the middle grades, students need to extend their abilities to identify and express emotions. At this age, students are becoming aware of personal language codes and styles. Teachers use flexible grouping practices for formal and informal discussions. It is important that during these years students develop an awareness of language in social situations and predict the effects which their choices of language and modes of delivery may have on others.

Adolescent literature which addresses the concerns and needs of students at this level will be an important source for extending oracy development, especially through their personal responses to such literature.

At the level of specialized oracy students become skillful at speaking and listening in many speech styles. The curriculum assists teachers to devise situations which will encourage the use of speech for various purposes. Activities include panel discussions, conversations, interviews, demonstrations, class meetings, dramatic dialogue, and readers theatre. Literature is a major source of language models for continued oracy development: students listen for and respond to "voices" in literature. Responding orally to literature is an important way to engage students in meaningful talk.

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